Ports

What is a Port?
A port is a two-part device that allows us to give you medications and fluids and to take blood samples without the discomfort of starting an IV each time. Ports are called *vascular or venous access devices* because they provide access to your veins.

A port is placed under your skin in a minor outpatient procedure. A common location for a port is just below your right collarbone.

The device has two parts:

- **The port reservoir** sits in a pocket just under your skin and has a raised silicone center called a septum. The septum is where needles are inserted, so it is made from material that seals itself after each puncture.

- **The catheter** is a soft, thin tube. It connects to the port reservoir on one end. The other end lies in a large vein near your heart.

A port can stay in place permanently, if necessary, or it can be removed when it’s no longer needed. When not in use, the only care a port needs is a monthly flush with heparin and saline.

Other names for ports: Chest ports, implanted ports, Port-A-Cath®, Infus-A-Port®, SmartPort®, Mediport®, or PowerPort®.

How does the Port Work?
A special needle is inserted through the skin into the port. The medication passes through the catheter into a large vein in the chest, where it is quickly diluted in the bloodstream.

How do I Care for my Port?
For the first few days after you get your port, you will need to take care of the small incision made during the procedure.

- You will receive written instructions on how to care for your port when it is placed.

(continued on back)
Caring for your Port - continued

• For 1-2 days after you get your port, the area will feel sore, like a bruise. It will be healed in about 10 days. **While healing, avoid heavy exertion and contact sports.**

• For the first week after getting your port - and anytime the port is accessed – **you must keep it clean and dry.** Cover the area around your port with a double layer of plastic wrap when showering and tape the edges down. Keep your back to the shower.

• For the first 2 weeks – and anytime the port is accessed – do not submerge the port in water (no pools, baths, etc.).

• Keep the bandage on the incision until it heals.

• If sterile tape/Steri Strip™ is used on the incision, do not pick it off. It will loosen and fall off on its own.

• Once the incision heals, the port needs no special care. You do not need a bandage, and you can resume your normal activity level when the port is not in use.

• We will give you information that tells you where your port is located on your body and whether it can be used for CT scan injections. Keep this information in a safe area.

**How Long do I Have to Keep the Port?**

Only your doctor can answer that question. When the port is no longer needed, it can be removed.

**What if I Suspect a Problem?**

It is common for the area around a new port to have some redness and/or soreness for 1-2 days. If redness/soreness lasts longer, call your doctor or clinic.

Call your doctor immediately if you have:

• **signs of infection:** fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, chills, pain, or swelling, or increasing redness or soreness near the port that lasts more than 2 days after it was put in

• shortness of breath or dizziness

• bleeding around the incision or port (after the 2nd day)

• bleeding that soaks through gauze (at any time)

• difficulty flushing, when port is accessed

**Urgent/Emergency Situations**

• Urgent, but not life-threatening symptoms: Call your Center. After hours, your call will be answered by our call center staff. Roswell’s 24/7 number: **716-845-2300.**

• If you are sick and need immediate evaluation, the physician may refer you to our Assessment and Treatment Center (ATC). (It is not a walk-in clinic.) The ATC is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

• **Emergencies: Call 911 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.** Please bring your green Roswell Park ID card with you.

• If you go to the ER or are hospitalized, please let us know.